

Dear Hands,  
Roughened and worn with ceaseless toil and  
care,  
No perfume grace, no dainty skill, had  
these;  
They earned for whiter hands a jewelry  
And kept the scars unlovely for their share.  
Patient and slow, they had the will to bear  
The whole world's burdens, but no power  
to seize  
The flying joys of life, the gifts that pass  
The gold and gems that others find so fair.  
Dear hands, whose bridal jewel never shone,  
Whereon no lover's kiss was ever pressed,  
Crossed in unrequited quest on the breast,  
Yea, through tears, your glory newly won,  
The golden crest of life's work well done,  
Set with the shining pearl of perfect rest.  
—Susan M. Spalding, in Atlantic Monthly.

## The Mysterious Patient.

A PHYSICIAN'S STORY.

I had graduated in the spring of  
1877 from the College of Physicians  
and Surgeons in New York, and was  
promoted by it capable of taking  
human life, and even life into my  
hands. I spent my early years in non-  
dering the question how I, an un-  
known man, was to secure the position  
and practice I had resolved to win.  
Fortunately I was not as destitute of  
means as patients. I resolved at  
once to take a fine office on Madison  
avenue, to have my coupe at the door  
after office hours and to go in and out  
as though overworked with calls.  
This was nothing more nor less than  
advertising, but it was not of the ta-  
bood kind.

One evening in midsummer—for I  
allowed myself no vacation that year  
I was sitting in my office when the  
sound of a carriage stopping at my  
door, and immediately  
afterward steps hurrying up the stoop,  
arrested my attention. My office boy  
whispered a man in a carriage had  
detained him long enough to induce  
my sense of importance, then rang for  
the boy to bring him to me.

"Confound it!" exclaimed my vis-  
itor, "if I had known you'd keep me  
waiting, I'd have gone somewhere  
else! Come now with me!"

"Where?" I asked.

"No matter now. I'll tell you as  
we go. It's a case requiring desperate  
help."

I took my hat and followed my im-  
perious visitor into the carriage. He  
gave a hurried order to the coachman,  
and we dashed off.

"What is the case?" I asked.

"That's for you to tell me, if you  
know anything about your business,"  
was the testy and unexpected reply.  
My companion was a man of about  
forty years. In the features of his  
noble except for an expression of self-  
will, which almost ruined it. His beard  
was that of a man of the world;  
his manners almost—though not quite  
—those of a gentleman. As he had  
relapsed into silence after his last re-  
ply, I followed his example, and sat  
quietly awaiting the next turn of  
affairs.

The carriage stopped at a plain brick  
house in a quiet neighborhood. Before  
the wheels had ceased to turn, my  
companion opened the door, and with  
the one word "Come!" led me up the  
steps.

The door was immediately opened  
from within, and we ascended to the  
second story. What was my amaze-  
ment to find myself in an apartment  
furnished not only luxuriously, but  
with rare magnificence.

I probably hesitated a moment on  
the threshold, for my companion again  
said "Come!" in the imperative tone  
with which I had grown familiar, and  
turned to the bed.

There lay my patient—a young girl  
about eighteen. Her large blue eyes,  
dulled with disease, were staring  
consciously before her. Her long  
golden hair was tossed over the pil-  
low, looking like a halo around the  
beautiful head. Who was this man  
who, with a middle-aged, stern face,  
the only apparent guardian of such  
youth and loveliness?

But the case was so serious I soon  
put aside every thought not connect-  
ed with the patient. To my occasional  
questions the nurse gave me replies as  
brief as the man had given.

I wrote my prescription, gave the  
necessary directions for the night, say-  
ing I would call early in the morning,  
and rose to leave. The man followed  
me to the door.

"What's your fee?" said he.

I told him.

"Come early to-morrow. Give the  
case every attention. I'll make it  
worth your while."

I judged from his tone that he was  
pleased with my appearance and ven-  
tured to ask if the lady was his wife.

"She is your patient. You need  
know nothing further," was his curt  
reply.

I bowed and went out into the  
night. The carriage was waiting, so I  
entered it and was soon at home.

For several weeks I continued my  
visit. Although the conditions of  
general health improved, I was not  
satisfied with the results of my treat-  
ment on the disease. There were  
fluctuations which at times encour-  
aged me, but the disease was obstinate  
and would not yield.

During all this time I had no knowl-  
edge of these people or their relations  
to each other.

It was evident that they wished to  
conceal themselves from their friends,  
and I always feared there was some-  
thing wrong about it.

But that was none of my business.  
It was my duty, however, if possible,  
to find the cause of this lovely girl's  
illness, as it was evident that I needed  
this aid in securing her recovery.

So I asked for private interview with  
the man whom I had myself called  
Cerberus.

Very reluctantly he led me to a  
room below, the condition of which  
showed that all the time he had spent  
furnishing the young lady's apart-  
ments were. My companion neither  
took a seat nor invited me to do so.

"Sir," said I, "it is necessary, if the  
peculiar cerebral condition of my  
patient is to be successfully treated,  
that I should know more than I do of  
its cause; also whether there are  
hereditary tendencies which complicate  
it."

He looked up at me fiercely, and  
coming close, shook his fist in my face,  
saying at the same time:

"That's nothing but curiosity! You  
doctors pretend to understand disease,  
and to be able to cure it, yet you will  
let a soul like this lie in darkness  
rather than do your best without  
knowing its secrets! I scorn you all!  
Go!"

He turned from the room, leaving  
me standing there alone. I left the  
house with the feeling that I should  
not re-enter it. Evidently my services  
were no longer desired, and I was con-  
vinced that they could be of no great  
value unless I could have the informa-  
tion I had sought in vain.

What was my astonishment that  
evening to see the woman whom I had  
always found by the bedside of my  
mysterious patient come into my room.  
She was a most respectable woman,  
and I had been pleased with the in-  
telligence with which she had nursed  
her charge. Startled, I said, "Is she  
your wife?"

"She is the same, doctor," was the  
reply, in a quiet, even a dull tone.  
"There may be no chance for her ever  
to be better, but if you knew all about  
her, perhaps you could help her more."

"Had you permission to do this?"  
I asked, though I confess I was suffer-  
ing as keen pains of curiosity as I  
have ever known.

"No," was her reply; "but it is right  
for you to know. You have done  
more for my young lady than any other  
doctor has. Perhaps you can cure her  
if you know all."

I told her to take a seat, and pre-  
pared to listen.

"I was nurse to my young lady's  
mother," began the woman; "and  
when she was married, as she was at  
seventeen, she came to live with her  
husband. She was so gay and happy, and  
her husband so proud of her! She loved  
every beautiful thing, and he made  
her home like a fairy palace. Just be-  
fore her baby was born, she was ill  
seven months—she was almost quite  
gone, and she was a wild creature. In  
some way it became  
known that her husband's sharp corner  
of the stone step, and he was killed."

"My mistress said it, and he was  
standing there waiting to kiss her  
good-night, and she was looking away.  
At first we thought she was only  
shocked, but the doctors—we had three  
—shook their heads from the first and  
soon everybody said there was no  
hope. My mistress was almost wild  
with grief and horror. A month later  
her baby was born. The poor little  
thing never laughed like other babies."

"When she was three days old her  
mamma died, and I took charge of the  
child. She was always gentle and  
sweet, but never gay as her mamma  
used to be. Often she would say to  
me: 'Nurse, I wish I could be merry  
like other children; but everything  
is so sad here.'"

"When she was old enough I told  
her the story of her papa and mamma  
and their sad death. Oh, how she  
cried, poor dear. 'I remember it all,'  
she would say, 'and I shall never  
forget it.'"

"I have seen it all in my dreams, very  
often, but I did not understand it."

"On her last birthday she was of the  
age of her mother when she was  
born. The night before she was  
very sad, and had made me tell her  
the whole painful story of her parents'  
death over again. In the morning she  
had disappeared, and after a long  
search I found that she had been  
born, but which had been dead for  
so many years. There she sat, my  
poor child, her beautiful face shadowed  
in gloom, her finger pointing to the  
place which had killed her papa. When  
I tried to rouse her, I found that her  
reason had gone."

"That was three months ago, sir.  
The gentleman who is with her is her  
guardian, and he is very anxious that  
she should never be known that she has  
been dead. So we came here and hid  
ourselves where we knew nobody could  
find us. He made her know like those  
at home, so that everything should be  
familiar to her when consciousness  
should return. He won't give her  
name or his to anyone, for fear of their  
being remembered when she's well  
again."

I asked several questions of a profes-  
sional nature, and then said there  
was a chance of rousing the sufferer  
by a shock; that heretofore I had tried  
to do this by keeping her calm; now,  
if I were to continue in charge of her  
case, I should try another method.

She treated me to do so, and to  
ignore the dismissal I had received  
from the guardian that morning.

"Hush," I asked, "no one should  
be there now whose presence  
would stir her pulses if she were  
well?"

The woman hesitated, but said:

"Yes, she has a lover. He is not  
favored by her guardian, who has

other plans for her, but they love each  
other truly, and grief at being for-  
bidden to see him had a great deal to  
do with her illness."

"Then we must work secretly in  
bringing him here, must we not?" I  
asked.

"Willst defeat our purpose if we  
take the guardian into our confi-  
dence?"

"It will not do to tell him any-  
thing," she said.

"Can you give me the lover's ad-  
dress?"

She did so, and I saw that a day or  
two must elapse before he could reach  
New York, even if I telegraphed at  
once.

"I will continue the case a little  
longer," said I. "If this effort fails,  
I will resign it to more competent  
hands."

The woman bowed and rose to go.  
I noticed that she veiled her face  
closely, and drew around her the  
arms of those nondescript garments ladies  
call water-proof, and which I have  
waited impatiently for morning  
though many of the intervening hours  
were spent in studying recorded cases  
similar to those of my patient.

At last the hour for my visit came.  
I decided to visit it without explana-  
tion, as though it were expected.  
I found things as usual in the sick-  
room. Cerberus looked surprised, but  
said nothing.

I thought relieved also, at my ap-  
pearance. The nurse gave no sign of  
any understanding between us.

I tried to fix the wandering eye of  
my patient by a resolute look in my  
own, and was glad to see that she  
evidently understood me.

Holding her attention in this way I  
spoke one or two words, to which she  
seemed to listen, and then broke away  
from the restraint.

It was a disadvantage not to know  
her name, as the sound of it would  
have arrested her attention more than  
anything else. But I found that she  
could be held for a moment at a time.  
I changed the entire plan of my pre-  
scriptions, and telling the nurse that  
I wanted her to call her mistress dis-  
tinctly by name every time she gave  
her medicine or refreshment, went  
away.

That evening I was glad to see some  
slight changes, indicating that my plan  
was working well.

On my return home I wrote to the  
absent lover, telling him all I thought  
necessary, and urging him to come  
home at once. Meantime I would do  
my best with my patient.

It was at midnight, two days later,  
when I was roused from sleep by a  
furious ringing of the night-bell. In  
answer to my inquiries a voice, eager,  
even hoarse, with emotion, cried to  
me:

"For heaven's sake, doctor, come  
down and tell me how and where she  
is!"

I then knew that my visitor was my  
patient's lover. Though the tender  
passion had not yet touched me, I sym-  
pathized with the young man's feelings  
strong enough to go to him as soon as  
possible.

I found him exhausted, mentally as  
well as physically. For three months,  
ever since the mysterious disappear-  
ance of the young lady, he had wan-  
dered over the country in search of  
her, following traces which had led  
him far astray.

My first duty was evident, and I  
offered him some refreshment. He  
would not touch it. But he would touch  
nothing till I assured him of the safety  
of his Madeline—for this was her  
name.

I told him how the case had been  
brought to me; how my treatment of  
it had failed; how I depended on him  
to aid me now.

"We must," I continued, "find an  
hour when the guardian is not. Then  
we will go to the room, and you will  
speak to me suddenly, but quietly. We  
will see what the effect will be."

It was so late, I persuaded Mr. How-  
land—that was his name, Horace  
Howland—that he should wait until  
the morning. But he would not wait  
during the remainder of the night. On  
my return to my room I wrote the fol-  
lowing note to the nurse:

"Mr. Howland has come. We must  
send him to the room at once. He is  
out. Put one of these cards in the  
window to tell me at what time we  
shall call."

I folded cards with the various  
names of the young lady, and placed  
them in the window. I then retired to  
sleep.

It was with a sense of relief that I  
saw the sun shining when I awoke—  
all nervous conditions are so much more  
favorably met on a bright than on a  
dull day.

Mr. Howland was sleeping as I  
passed through the room. Poor fellow!  
how haggard and pale he was! But I  
saw that his face and hands were noble.  
I called to him, and he came. He  
told me that he had been looking for  
his love for a long time. My lovely patient  
was better in every way. Her sleep  
had been refreshing, and she was more  
attentive to what I said than she had  
been before.

Her guardian stood by as usual, and  
I found it difficult to give my note to  
the nurse without attracting his atten-  
tion. I accomplished it finally, and  
he told me that about an hour I  
passed the house, and on looking up at  
the designated window, saw the fig-  
ures "1-3."

arms, fell on his neck and sank in a  
swoon. All this was well; but how  
would she come out of the faint con-  
dition?

"We put her" on the lounge, and after  
applying restoratives for a long time,  
consciousness began to return.

She opened her eyes, saw Horace  
standing at the foot of the lounge, and  
tears began to flow; then sobbing—strong,  
convulsive sobs—shook her delicate  
frame. The nurse wanted to check  
them, but I desired their continuance  
without restraint.

Horace, meantime, had knelt by her  
side, and was holding her lovely head  
on his broad shoulder, and whispering  
words of love and tenderness into the  
awakened ear. She looked into his  
face with joy at last in her eyes, and  
said:

"Horace, he told me that stone  
killed you, too."

Then she fell into a peaceful sleep.  
I knew it would last for hours, and  
I called the nurse to get everything  
ready for her when she awoke. Then  
I had promised an interview with  
Frolof. It was even pro-  
posed to send him to my hotel, escorted  
by gentlemen. But I cared too much  
for my reputation to accede to such a  
position. Besides, that would be  
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I answered that I would be free  
from 12 o'clock. At 3 o'clock the next  
day Mr. N. called for me with his car-  
riage. Frolof's hands must have been  
warm from the last execution. He  
had just returned from St. Petersburg,  
where he had hung two nihilists,  
Prenskioff and Kiwiakowski.

The central prison where the execu-  
tioner resides is situated in the sub-  
terranean part of the city, and is a  
very romantic. Imagine a vast inclosed  
surrounded by a palisade twelve feet  
high, and guarded by sentries in long  
gray coats with fixed bayonets. In the  
middle of the wall, and in a small  
basement of which Frolof rarely goes  
in a kind of underground cave. We  
descended a dirty stairway and reached  
a dark room, which was more like a  
den for beasts than anything else.

A woman dragging a dirty urchin came  
to meet us.

My friend said to her, "Where is  
Frolof?"

"He is not at home," she answered;  
"he has gone out to make a few pur-  
chases. But he will be back in five  
minutes. Perhaps you have come to  
buy some rope?"

"Oh! it never was in such demand  
as it is now. Be seated, my husband  
will be in presently."

This was the executioner's wife.  
She had a very sweet voice, and blue  
eyes, but her complexion was heavy  
and colorless. She wore the costume  
of the country people—the chemise  
with large puffed sleeves, the red sar-  
afan, and a black apron fastened upon  
her shoulders.

Upon the table a samovar, with a  
breast of a shining copper color, was  
singing. Some worn-out tin snare  
drums were hanging on the wall. The  
old "first-footing" custom of the  
country was still observed. The  
men, women and children, each one  
of whom has his or her newest gar-  
ments on, and all of them are bent  
upon the errand of paring fingernails.

A sound of footsteps was heard in  
the courts above.

"He is not at home," said his wife;  
"the gentlemen who accompanied him  
have just returned."

In a few minutes he appeared, en-  
tirely filling the doorway with his  
bulk. He was a man of about thirty  
years, with a broad forehead, and his  
himmense head, with its shaggy  
mane of black hair. He wore a  
small hat, a red shirt under his tunic,  
and a black coat. He was looking  
gladly into his boots. Contrary  
to the expectation of sentimentalists,  
there was nothing terrifying in the  
aspect of this indefatigable slayer of  
men.

The only noticeable difference  
between him and any other man was  
the brute strength shown in his thick  
neck and his immense muscular arms.

Frolof is as good as twenty gen-  
darmes. When an insurrection threat-  
ens to break out among the prisoners,  
it is only necessary for Frolof to show  
himself at the door armed with a whip  
or a club, and order and silence are  
immediately restored. He once killed  
two rebellious prisoners with a single  
blow of his fist. The memory of this  
exploit is preserved among the pris-  
oners.

Frolof asked us to be seated; then,  
after a moment, he told us about the  
execution which he had just performed  
at St. Petersburg. Everything went  
off smoothly. The scaffold was  
erected early in the morning, at a dis-  
tance of 250 meters from the prison.  
The condemned men, clothed in long  
white robes, their hands tied behind  
them and carrying upon their breasts  
a card bearing the inscription, "Con-  
demned for political crimes," were  
brought to the place of execution in a  
carriage between two rows of gen-  
darmes on foot and on horseback. They  
ascend a small staircase four steps high;  
in the twinkling of an eye a knot is  
slipped around their necks, and they  
are suddenly jerked away, the body  
falls into space, the limbs twist con-  
vulsively a few moments, and then all  
is over.

Frolof said that when Prenskioff  
saw the two gibbets from his carriage,  
he smiled, looking proudly and defiantly  
at his escort. Kiwiakowski, on the  
contrary, was terribly dejected, his  
head hung down, and he was pale as  
death. When they were about to be led  
to the scaffold, Prenskioff was heard to say to his  
companion: "Courage, brother, fear  
not death. I have lived a long time,  
and made the sign of the cross before  
dying. Kiwiakowski was thirty years  
old; Prenskioff twenty-five."

Frolof told us all this with the sim-  
plicity and ease of a mount re-  
lating a fairy tale at an evening gath-  
ering. It was evident that hanging  
was an every-day affair with him. He  
told us that this was his twenty-fifth  
hanging, and that he looked forward  
for still better times.

He then offered each of us a bit of  
genuine rope; for he freely acknowl-

## FROLOF, THE EXECUTIONER.

INTERVIEW WITH THE RUSSIAN  
HANGMAN AT THE HOME.An Executioner Retired from Business  
Who Does All the Legal Strangling for the  
Czar in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The following is a narrative of an  
interview which M. Victor Tissot, a  
Frenchman, had at Moscow with Frolof,  
the Russian executioner of all the  
Bussians. Frolof is an ex-murderer  
retired from business, condemned to  
death by the tribunals, but whose sentence  
has been commuted to perpetual  
imprisonment on condition that he  
should continue to carry on for the  
state the little business which he for-  
merly carried on for himself.

Frolof has been locked up for the  
last fifteen years in the central prison  
at Moscow. If a hanging is to take  
place at Kiev, Odessa or St. Peter-  
burg, Frolof is sent thither under es-  
cort. I had been promised an inter-  
view with Frolof. It was even pro-  
posed to send him to my hotel, escorted  
by gentlemen. But I cared too much  
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ascend a small staircase four steps high;  
in the twinkling of an eye a knot is  
slipped around their necks, and they  
are suddenly jerked away, the body  
falls into space, the limbs twist con-  
vulsively a few moments, and then all  
is over.

Frolof said that when Prenskioff  
saw the two gibbets from his carriage,  
he smiled, looking proudly and defiantly  
at his escort. Kiwiakowski, on the  
contrary, was terribly dejected, his  
head hung down, and he was pale as  
death. When they were about to be led  
to the scaffold, Prenskioff was heard to say to his  
companion: "Courage, brother, fear  
not death. I have lived a long time,  
and made the sign of the cross before  
dying. Kiwiakowski was thirty years  
old; Prenskioff twenty-five."

Frolof told us all this with the sim-  
plicity and ease of a mount re-  
lating a fairy tale at an evening gath-  
ering. It was evident that hanging  
was an every-day affair with him. He  
told us that this was his twenty-fifth  
hanging, and that he looked forward  
for still better times.

He then offered each of us a bit of  
genuine rope; for he freely acknowl-

edged that if he did not sometimes  
substitute bogus rope for the genuine  
he could not make it last. For gam-  
blers—and what Russian will not  
gamble?—will spend their rubles  
freely for these bits of rope, which are  
supposed to bring good luck to their  
possessor. Frolof derives a consider-  
able revenue from the hangman's rope!

Frolof accompanied us as far as the  
foot of the steps of his cave, and when  
he went back a gendarme closed upon  
him the massive door which makes the  
executioner











